



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

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FEDERAL GRANT TO IMPROVE SPECIAL NEEDS TRAINING

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Kentucky and 21 other states will share \$24 million in grant money from the U.S. Department of Education to improve personnel training systems to help children with disabilities.

In the first year of the five-year grant, Kentucky will receive \$1,137,671 from the State Personnel Development Grants Program, authorized by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The program provides funds to assist states in reforming and improving their systems for personnel preparation and professional development in early intervention, education and transition services in order to improve results for children with disabilities. The funding period runs from October 2012 to September 2017.

Under the program, states must partner with at least one higher education institution to implement the terms of the grant. States must also partner with at least one local education agency and either a Parent Training and Information Center or a Community Parent Resource Center. The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) will partner with the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville for the purposes of this grant.

The grant will support the state's efforts to improve its training systems for staff to better serve children with disabilities. Kentucky's efforts will support two goals:

- to better prepare all students with disabilities to reach proficiency and graduate from high school ready for college and careers through increased academic (reading and math) achievement and closing existing achievement gaps
- to better prepare students with low incidence disabilities to reach proficiency and graduate from high school ready for college and careers through increased and enhanced academic achievement, communication capacity and transition opportunities

(more)

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The state will use the grant money to work with regional educational cooperatives and the Education Recovery Leaders (ERL) and Specialists (ERS) to provide ongoing training and coaching for teachers of students with disabilities. The funding will support a co-teaching model through professional development on evidence-based instructional strategies.

The funds also will help specialists support the academic and communication professional development needs of teachers of students with low incidence disabilities, related service personnel and families in their regions, as well as implement a formal transition to higher education model for students with Individual Education Programs who remain in high school until the age of 21. This work will help address the needs of students with low incidence disabilities who participate in the alternate assessment program.

Successful implementation of this project will result in increased academic achievement and readiness for college/career for students with disabilities; increased student communication capacity; decreased achievement gaps between students with and without disabilities; and an enhanced regional professional development delivery system with more capacity to serve school districts and schools in their regions.

States receiving grants are: Alabama, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and Wisconsin. The grants are being funded under the Office of Special Education Programs.

For information about the specific grants, please visit www.signetwork.org.

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